



# Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

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## **MEDIA AVAILABILITY**

### **Midwest company to demonstrate new device designed to control *Spartina***

#### **"Amphibian Shredder" will be demonstrated on Willapa Bay**

OLYMPIA – David Penny, president of a Kansas company that has successfully removed aquatic weeds from the Lower Rio Grande in Texas and the St. John's River in Florida, will demonstrate Monday (Aug. 12) a device that will shred and destroy *Spartina* in Willapa Bay. If the "Amphibian Shredder" is successful, Penny will sign a contract with the state Department of Agriculture to eradicate 1,000 acres from the bay during the next 10 months.

Who: David Penny, president of Master's Dredging Company, Inc.

What: Demonstrate the "Amphibian Shredder" on Willapa Bay

When: Noon, Monday, Aug. 12

Where: The demonstration will begin at the Palix River boat launch. Reporters will have the opportunity to view the area from airboats after the demonstration. The boat launch is located just off of highway 101 approximately 20 miles south of Raymond. It is south of the Palix River Bridge.

Why: *Spartina* is a noxious weed that now covers 6,000 acres of Willapa Bay. *Spartina* disrupts native saltwater ecosystems, threatening fish and bird habitat and increasing the threat of floods. Ten counties in Western Washington have infestations of *Spartina* with the largest infestations in Willapa Bay and in Island, Snohomish and Skagit counties.

The Department of Agriculture is the lead agency for coordinating *Spartina* control and eradication efforts in the state. Efforts to combat the noxious weed are based on an integrated weed management approach, which includes hand pulling, digging, mowing, covering with fabric or plastic, spraying with herbicides and biological control.

*Spartina* was first introduced to the Pacific Northwest from the East Coast in the late 1880s as packing materials on ships.

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